

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system for selecting, erasing or reproducing program recordings using marking and descriptive data which is transmitted to a client location from a remote processing location. A database of identification signals specifying the characteristics of a known programming is maintained at a remote processing location. In a first embodiment, selected identification signals are downloaded from the database to the client location and are used by a processor at the client location to identify desired programming within a locally stored collection of previously received broadcast programming signals. In a second arrangement, locally stored programming signals are processed to extract identification data which is uploaded from the client location to the remote processing location for comparison to the database, and information describing the content of the matching programs is returned to the client location for use as a program guide, facilitating the selection, permanent storage, or playback of desired program records and/or the erasure of undesired programming. To conserve local storage space, identified program records may be uploaded and stored at the remote processing location, or shared program records in a central library may be made available for remote playback after an the identity of equivalent locally stored programming is confirmed.